



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE MUSICAL TIMES, And Singing Class Circular.

DECEMBER 1st, 1860.

MOZART'S SUCCINCT THOROUGH-BASS SCHOOL.*

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

SABILLA NOVELLO.

Brompton, Dec. 28, 1854.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your question as to the circumstances connected with the origin of Mozart's Succinct Method of Thorough-Bass, I have to say, that in an interview which I had with the Abbé Stadler at Vienna, in 1827, he informed me that such a work was written for his niece by Mozart. This young lady was Mozart's pupil in pianoforte playing and harmony; and friendship for her, and for her uncle, made him undertake the task. I am pretty certain that together with a portion of the manuscript sheets of the *Requiem*, which the Abbé showed me, I saw also those of this little book; the former work, of course, from its great interest, has the stronger hold on my memory.

However, of the authenticity of the Thorough-Bass there can be no doubt. I believe that a little book published at Berlin, under the title *Kurz Gefasste Methode der General Bass Von W. A. Mozart*, is the work in question.

To some it may appear improbable that so great a master should undertake such dry labour; but not so to those who know the facts of Mozart's history and the great benevolence of his character. In his day there were no books of harmony which taught compendiously all that was necessary to be known of the due proportion of intervals, and the correct designation of the notes of chords; each master taught as he could by tradition. It is a fresh proof of Mozart's comprehensive power in all which appertained to his own art, that he could condense in a few brief pages, on the spur of the moment, everything that the treatment of the subject required. The execution is eminently practical, without the expenditure of a single superfluous word.

The venerable priest who showed me the manuscripts, though past his 80th year, had a countenance glowing with animation while he spoke to me of his friend Mozart—the composer and the man.

I am, dear Sir, yours very truly,

E. HOLMES.

J. A. Novello, Esq.

I.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THOROUGH-BASS.

TEN figures are used in thorough-bass to represent intervals: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10; the unison, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the octave, the ninth, and the tenth; which last merely reproduces the third. When three of these ten figures are played with the bass note, they form a four-note chord; when two are played, they form a three-note chord.

Chords are called perfect, imperfect, and dissonant. There are only two perfect chords; one consists of a minor third, perfect fifth and octave; the second consists of the major third, perfect fifth and octave. Example:—

No. 1.



Remark.—When the perfect chord $\frac{8}{3}$ is to be played, only one of these figures, or even a b , \sharp , or $\#$ is written above the fundamental note; sometimes no figure at all is used; but if two intervals of this chord are

contradicted by two others, these intervals must be marked by their figures, thus: $\frac{4}{3}$, $\frac{5}{3}$, $\frac{2}{3}$.

The imperfect chords are also two in number, marked $\frac{8}{3}$ and $\frac{8}{4}$ and are called the chord of the sixth and the chord of the six-four. The first may contain a minor third, minor sixth, and octave; or, a minor third, major sixth, and octave; or, a major third, major sixth, and octave. When it differs in these intervals, it belongs to the dissonant chords. For example, on C:—

No. 2.



The chord of the six-four can only be used in two ways as an imperfect chord, viz., with a perfect fourth, major sixth and octave; and with a perfect fourth, minor sixth and octave. When the fourth is diminished or augmented, the chord belongs to the dissonants; for example:—

No. 3.



Dissonant chords contain all the three seconds; the diminished third; the diminished and augmented fourth; also the perfect fourth accompanied by the fifth and octave; the diminished and augmented fifth; even the perfect fifth, when in conjunction with the sixth, as in the $\frac{6}{3}$, or $\frac{8}{4}$. The diminished and augmented sixth; all three sevenths; the diminished octave and the augmented unison, which last is figured by some composers as the augmented octave; the two ninths, and the diminished tenth; whatever accompaniment they may have.

II.

In order that the foregoing and following instructions may be more clearly understood, the usual intervals without accompaniment may be seen above the fundamental note C. The master must often examine his pupil in other keys, and at the same time tell him, that the perfect unison, the minor and major third, the perfect fifth, the minor and major sixth, the perfect octave, the minor and major tenth, are alone *consonant* intervals; but that the augmented unison, the minor, major, and augmented second, the diminished third, the diminished, perfect, and augmented fourth, the diminished and augmented fifth, the diminished and augmented sixth, the diminished, minor and major seventh, the diminished octave, the minor and major ninth, the diminished tenth, are *dissonant* intervals.

* Reprinted by permission from Novello's Library for the diffusion of Musical Knowledge. Vol. IV.

or $\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{5}{3}$ $\frac{4}{2}$ * $\frac{5}{3}$

*Also thus. Better with 4.

$\frac{6}{4}$ $\frac{5}{3}$ $\frac{4}{2}$ $\frac{5}{3}$ $\frac{5}{3}$ =

Bound second.

or $\frac{5}{2}$ = or $\frac{5}{2}$

with doubled fifth, or with doubled second itself.

THE THIRD.

The third is three-fold, namely: diminished, minor, and major. The first consists of two major semitones, the second of a whole tone and major semitone, the third of two whole tones: for example:—

Diminished. Minor. Major.

No. 8.

The first, which occurs but seldom, and usually has a curved mark (∩) over it, is accompanied by the diminished fifth and diminished seventh.

To the minor and major thirds, which occur very often, belong the fifth and octave, or the unison instead of the octave, which may be omitted altogether in playing.

Remark.—When an accidental alone is written above the bass notes, it signifies the third, and therefore the whole minor or major chord. It is usual to double the third, in a major third chord, in order to avoid the augmented second progression; particularly after a dominant seventh, or after a major third with \sharp , which is the leading note, and always requires to ascend a semitone. For example:—

No. 9.

$\frac{7}{\sharp}$ $\frac{5}{\sharp}$ or $\frac{7}{\sharp}$ $\frac{5}{\sharp}$ or $\frac{7}{\sharp}$ $\frac{5}{\sharp}$

$\frac{7}{\sharp}$ $\frac{5}{\sharp}$ $\frac{7}{\sharp}$ $\frac{5}{\sharp}$ $\frac{7}{\sharp}$ $\frac{5}{\sharp}$

Bad. Good. Bad.

Should many thirds or tenths follow each other, the first or last are played in four parts, the intermediate in three or two parts; the last is best in quick passages; for example:—

No. 10.

$\frac{8}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{5}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$

Minor and major thirds.

Allegro.

$\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{3}$

(To be continued)

MADAME NOVELLO'S FAREWELL CONCERT.

Abridged from "The Times."

ON Wednesday, the 21st of November, at the St. James's Hall, Madame Clara Novello sung her last notes in this country. The audience was exceedingly numerous, and every manifestation of artistic skill met with enthusiastic demonstrations of approval. The performance of Madame Novello was an exhibition of pure unadulterated art from beginning to end, and at the termination of the Concert the vast assembly dispersed with the intimate conviction that music had lost one of its most gifted and justly distinguished representatives. When Clara Novello first came before the public, her voice at once elicited unanimous admiration, as one of the most perfect "sopranos" England had ever produced within the memory of the oldest amateurs, and her talent warranted unrestricted belief in her future eminence. All that was then predicted has been more than realized. Miss Novello went to Italy, and as the Clara, was pre-eminently successful at the Scala of Milan, and other first-class theatres. Her return to London led to a series of professional triumphs, almost without example, and were only arrested by her marriage with an Italian nobleman, and her consequent retirement from the arena of public exhibition. Upon subsequently resuming her professional career, she was welcomed back with rapture by every genuine lover of the musical art. It is not too much to say that all the principal performances at Exeter Hall, and at our great provincial festivals, have for the last ten years, or thereabouts, owed their chief attractions to the singing of this accomplished lady. The irreparable loss now sustained by the musical world was deeply felt on the occasion of her farewell, and her execution of the different pieces in the programme, which we have not space more particularly to refer to, elicited unqualified admiration of her artistic refinement, and the avowal from all sides was that her voice at this, the moment of her abdicating the throne she has so long and so gloriously filled, was as clear and penetrating, as vigorous and flexible, as bell-like and silver-toned in quality, and as unerringly modulated, as ever. Of Mr. Benedict's *Undine*, which occupied the second part of the performance, we can only say, at present, that the general execution was good, that Madame Novello, Miss Palmer, Mr. Wilbye Cooper, and Mr. Weiss were all that could be wished in their respective parts, and that the highly favourable opinion pronounced on the Cantata in the reports of the Norwich Festival, were more than justified by a second hearing; the chorus was efficient, and the whole performance met with a most enthusiastic reception, and honours were lavished upon the accomplished composer, who directed the music with his accus-